Please amend the first and second paragraphs of page 17 as follows:

--which has both buckling resistance and pressure resistance in a radial direction.

The ratio of the short fibers 2 which are oriented in the axial, circumferential, or spiral direction along which the magnitude of the load is large is requested to be 20 or more wt.% by weight of the total amount of the short fibers 2. When the ratio of the short fibers 2 which are oriented in the axial or circumferential direction is smaller than 20 wt.%, the ratio of random orientations is increased and the buckling resistance or the pressure resistance in a radial direction is reduced. In the case where a higher mechanical strength is required, it is preferable to set the orientation ratio of the short fibers 2 to be 50 or more wt.%.--

Please amend the second paragraph of page 18 as follows:

--The annular sliding fluoroplastics member 10 to which the plural filaments 9 are stitched as shown in Fig. 11 can attain the effect that the resistance to wear is improved by the reinforcing action of the filaments 9, in addition to the effects of the first embodiment. Consequently, mechanical strength is further enhanced.--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-21 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

Please add the following new claims:

22. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member having a composite structure which mainly consists of fluorine plastic and short fibers, wherein 20 or more wt.% of short fibers by weight of a total amount of said short fibers are oriented in a direction along which the magnitude of a load is large.

23. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein 20 or more wt.% of the short fibers by weight of the total amount of said short fibers are oriented in an axial direction of said annular sliding fluoroplastics member.

24. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein 20 or more wt.% of the short fibers by weight of the total amount of said short fibers are oriented in a circumferential direction of said annular sliding fluoroplastics member.

25. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein 20 or more wt.% of the short fibers by weight of the total amount of said short fibers are oriented in a spiral direction of said annular sliding fluoroplastics member.

26. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein 50 or more wt.% of the short fibers by weight of the total amount of said short fibers are oriented in a direction along which the magnitude of a load is large.

27. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein said short fibers are fibrillated aramid fibers, and said fluorine plastics is PTFE plastics.

28. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein said composite structure is a structure in which a number of fluorine plastics layers containing short fibers are stacked in a radial direction, and each of said stacked layers has a wavy sectional shape which undulates in an axial direction of said annular sliding fluoroplastics member.

29. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 28, wherein overlapping faces of said layers are integrally coupled to one another.

30. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein plural filaments are stitched to said composite structure which mainly consists of said fluorine

plastics and said short fibers.

31. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 30, wherein, as said filaments, long fibers selected from aramid fibers, glass fibers, polyimide fibers, and PTFE fibers which are stretched, or metal wires selected from stainless wires, aluminum wires, and copper wires are used.

32. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein at least one surface of said annular sliding fluoroplastics member having said composite structure which mainly consists of said fluorine plastics and said short fibers is covered with an expanded graphite sheet.

33. An annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 22, wherein said annular sliding fluoroplastics member having said composite structure which mainly consists of said fluorine plastics and said short fibers is impregnated with a lubricant.

34. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member comprising the steps of: forming a mixture of fluorine plastics and short fibers into a sheet-like element; cutting out a tape-like element from said sheet-like element; spirally winding said cut out tape-like element to form an annular wound body; compressively deforming said wound body by pressurizing said wound body in an axial direction; during or after the deformation, heating said wound body to a temperature which is equal to or higher than a melt temperature of said fluorine plastics; and cooling said wound body to harden said wound body.

35. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein a direction along which said tape-like element is cut out from said sheet-like element is a direction which is perpendicular to the orientation of said short fibers.

36. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein a direction along which said tape-like element is cut out from said sheet-like element is a direction which is parallel to the orientation of said short fibers.

37. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein a direction along which said tape-like element is cut out from said sheet-like element is a bias direction with respect to a rectangular sheet-like element.

38. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein said short fibers are fibrillated aramid fibers, and said fluorine plastics is PTFE plastics.

39. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein plural filaments are stitched to said sheet-like element at intervals, and said tape-like element is then cut out from said sheet-like element.

40. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 39, wherein, as said filaments, long fibers selected from aramid fibers, glass fibers, polyimide fibers, and PTFE fibers which are stretched, or metal wires selected from stainless wires, aluminum wires, and copper wires are used.

41. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein, when or after said tape-like element is spirally wound, an expanded graphite sheet is placed over at least one surface of said annular wound body to cover the surface with said expanded graphite sheet.

42. A method of producing an annular sliding fluoroplastics member according to claim 34, wherein said annular sliding fluoroplastics member which has been cooled and hardened